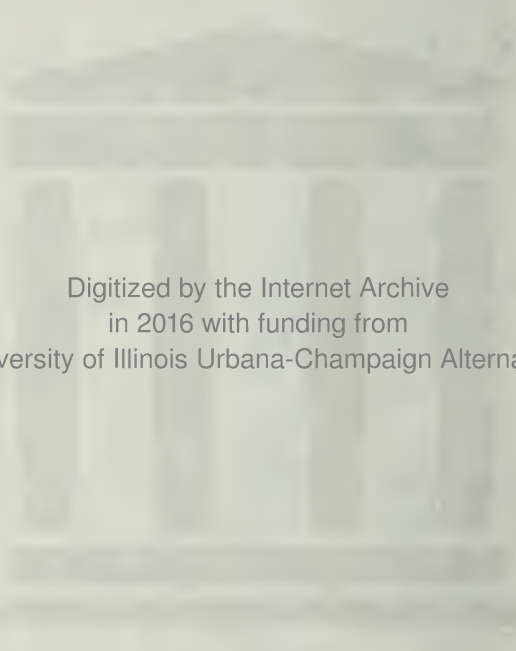


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(G. W. M.)

Mary Price



MARY PRICE;

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF A SERVANT GIRL.

A Domestic Drama,

IN TWO ACTS.

FOUNDED ON THE POPULAR WORK BY

MR. G. W. M. REYNOLDS.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,

89, STRAND,

(*Opposite Southampton Street, Covent Garden Market,*)

LONDON.

*First performed at the Royal Queen's Theatre, under the
Management of Mr. C. J. James.*

Characters.

LORD HARLESDON (<i>an aged Nobleman</i>).....	Mr. RANDALL.
LORD CLAVERING (<i>a Roué and Libertine</i>).....	Mr. MORETON.
LIEUTENANT AUBREY..	Mr. FORTUNE.
ROBERT PRICE (<i>a runaway Apprentice</i>)	Mr. GREEN.
TOMMY (<i>the Idiot</i>)	Mr. SENNETT.
NICK SAWBRIDGE } (<i>two Burglars</i>)	{ Mr. ANDERSON.
BILL BULLDOG }	{ Mr. RUSSELL.
BOOSY (<i>Landlord of the "Dog and Duck"</i>)	Mr. CROSBY.
DICK (<i>Pot Boy at the "Trampers' Arms"</i>)	
LADY HARLESDON.....	Miss SLADE.
MARY PRICE (<i>the Servant Girl</i>).....	Miss FORDE.
JEMIMA (<i>a Nursery Maid</i>)	Miss SENNETT.
MOTHER LEE (<i>an old Gipsy</i>)... ..	Mrs. PARRY.

Guests, Villagers, &c.

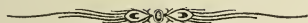
COSTUMES—PRESENT DAY.

[Mr. Lacy's List.]

MARY PRICE;

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF A SERVANT GIRL.



ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*Tap Room of the "Dog and Duck."* Door, L., window, L. C., open.

Music.—NICK SAWBRIDGE *discovered*, R., *seated and smoking*.

NICK. (*hammering on table*) Another pot of beer, Old Boosy. Look alive—d'ye hear?

BOOSY. (*without*, R.) Coming, Mister Sawbridge.

Enter BOOSY, R., *with pot of beer*.

BOOSY. (*holding out his hand*) Tip!

NICK. My pal, Bill Bulldog, will pay as soon as he comes.

BOOSY. (*behind table*) You must excuse me; can't give no more credit. There's a long score against you chalked up behind the door, and when that's wiped off—

NICK. Why, you old screw, do you mean to say as how you won't take my word for a pot o' beer? What a insult! Why, you extortionating old wagabond, I'll—

Enter BILL BULLDOG, door, L.

BILL. (*entering door*) Holloa, what's the row!

NICK. Old Boosy refuses to let me have another pot, and dares to insinuate something about a score behind the door.

BILL. Shameful! Better mind what you're about or you'll lose our *pateronage*. The Cat and Fiddle would be glad of our custom, for there's no more jolly fellows in all Ashford, nor coves what spends more money when we've got it. So, here—here's a tanner. Leave the beer, and the score shall be rubbed out next Saturday. (*aside to NICK as he sits*) Walker!

NICK. It'll never be rubbed out, I guess, unless he does it himself.

BOOSY. (*behind table*) Well, I never likes to offend respectable customers.

Replaces beer on table, takes sixpence, gives change, and exit, R.

NICK. (*seated R. of table*) You're a good fellow, Bill. Here's towards your very good health.

BILL. (*seated L. of table*) Thank you, Nick—arter you.

(*TOMMY sings without, L.*)

NICK. Holloa! who's this?

BILL. Why, the poor idiot, Tommy. Everybody knows him through the whole County of Kent.

Enter TOMMY, L., dancing and singing.

Air, "Sprig of Shillelah."

Kind gentleman, all, who sit here at your ease,
 Enjoying your beer, lend an ear, if you please
 To poor Tommy the idiot, who ne'er went to school.
 I'll dance and I'll sing for a brown all the day;
 Or a tune on the bellows to please ye I'll play.
 But my A, B, C, pray don't ax me to say,
 For I'm but a poor idiot, and don't know the way;
 Still it takes a wise man, sure, to make a good fool.

BILL. Right, Tommy; come, take a drink with us. See, here are two pots, one full and t'other empty, which will you have?

TOM. The full one, to be sure—ha, ha, ha! Tommy's not quite such a fool as to drink out of an empty pot—not likely, not likely. (*drinks all the beer*)

NICK. (*rising*) Why, curse the fellow, he has swallowed the lot at a draught. I don't believe he's half such a fool as he pretends to be.

BILL. (*rising*) Right you are, Nick. He's as deep as a well, though folks say he's watery-headed. But he'd be just the chap for us. Whenever we cracked a crib, we could shove him forward, you know, to face the danger. If he succeeded, all right; we collars the swag. If he got took, we cuts, and leaves him in the lurch, and he would be all right, for no judge or jury would hang a idiot, you know.

(*TOMMY has been catching flies, but listening all the time*)

NICK. (R.) Good! Tommy, will you join our party, and go to London with us?

TOM. (L. C.) No, thank you; Tommy's neck is very tender—not fond of choking. (*feeling his throat*) Shouldn't much like to be scragged—not likely, not likely.

Sings and dances off, L. door, appearing occasionally at window, overhearing what follows.

BILL. (C.) No go—mad Tommy ain't to be had. But what do you think ; you know Mary Price, the carpenter's daughter?

NICK. (R. C.) Yes ; what of her ?

BILL. Why, I met her just now in the market-place—just come down to Ashford by the train from London—and such a stunnin' swell ; more like a duchess than a poor sarvant gal.

NICK. Lor ! you don't say so !

BILL. I say, if we could only persuade her brother Bob to go to London with us.

NICK. Well, what then ?

BILL. Why, don't you see—Mary lives in a great nobleman's family. Bob could visit her of course, and contrive to hide in the house, and let us in at night, which would save us all the trouble and danger of forcing locks and bolts.

NICK. Blest if you ain't a deep 'un, Bill.

BILL. Hush ! here *is* Bob,

Enter ROBERT, L. door.

Well, old fellow, in course you've heard your sister is in Ashford?

ROBERT. Mary in Ashford !—oh ! how glad I shall be to see her !—yet, no ; for when I reflect on what I was while my dear parents lived, and then remember what now I am——

BILL. Yes, you're now a runaway 'prentice—every moment able to be took afore the beaks and sent to jail : that's the orrect version, I believe, Mr. Bob ?

ROBERT. Oh ! yes, and when my sister knows, it will break her heart.

BILL. Then follow my advice ; and you'll not only escape going to jail, but have the pleasure of seeing your sister as often as you wish.

ROBERT. (L. C.) Explain.

BILL. (C.) Nick and me are going to London—*on business*, you understand—come with us ?

ROBERT. When do you start ?

BILL. This very day.

ROBERT. Well, I—I will go with you.

NICK. Bravo !

Enter MARY PRICE, conducted by TOMMY, L. door.

TOM. This wav, Mary. Not a very respectable place ; won't find yourself at home here—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Robert !—my brother !

ROBERT. Mary !

MARY. And after twelve months' absence from my native place, is it in such a low, disgraceful place as this I find you,

B. NICK. BILL. TOMMY. MARY. ROBERT. L.

and in such society ! I sought you first at your master's, Mr. Mathews, but learned from him that you had left his house, and gone he knew not whither ; and, but for this poor idiot, I had not known where to find you.

TOM. Though Tommy's lost himself, he knows where to find everybody else ; but he don't like bad company—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Brother, are you mad, that you act thus ? If you forsake the path of honesty, and associate with characters such as these, what think you will become of you ?

NICK. Well, I'm blowed !

BILL. I'd have you to know, miss, or marm, or whatever else you call yourself, that—— (MARY turns her back on him)

TOM. Don't be afraid, Mary ; I'll muzzle the Bulldog. (*puts his hand on BILL's mouth*) Mary's not fond of Bulldogs—not likely, not likely.

MARY. If you will return with me to your master's, I will intercede for you ; and, rely on it, all will be forgiven, all forgotten.

ROBERT. Return ! He struck me—disgraced, dishonoured me by a blow. Bid me not then return, for I might kill him to avenge the insult.

MARY. Brother, such language freezes my very blood ! Oh ! reflect in time—pause on the precipice on which you stand—beware ! one false step hurls you to perdition !

BILL. Oh ! I say now, Miss Price, no preaching ; we don't come to the ale house to hear a sermon.

TOM. And I'm sure you never go to church to hear one : the fox don't like to be told it's werry wicked to prig the geese—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Brother, pray be warned ! Let a sister's love prevail with you. Think of the happy days of innocence we passed as children in our parents' cottage !—come to our mother's grave, kneel with me, and over her dear remains renew the vows you made beside her dying bed, to lead a life of honesty and virtue.

TOM. Good advice, Bob ; but you won't follow it—not likely, not likely.

ROBERT. Mary, you are a dear good girl, and I do promise to—to think of what you say. In a few days, no doubt, we shall meet in London : I intend to look after work there, and—and I'll try and follow your advice.

MARY. Come with me now. I'll pay your fare to London, and find you a lodging till you do get work. Pray remain not here another moment : to see you in this place, associating with these men, fills my soul with terror indescribable. (BILL and NICK are a little up, R.)

Re-enter LORD HARLESDON, R.

LORD H. What is this?

JEMIMA. (*crossing to LORD HARLESDON, and turning first to him and then to LADY HARLESDON*) Oh, my lord!—oh, my lady! please don't hang me! It was all my fault—I know it was—oh, oh! but, please don't hang me—please don't—oh, oh!

LORD H. What has happened?

LADY H. I tremble to know—she has returned without our dear Clementina! Speak, girl, unless you would see me mad with apprehension!

LORD H. Quick, girl, or——

JEMIMA. Oh, my lord!—oh, my lady!—an old gipsy woman—she tied a handkerchief over my eyes, till I was quite blind, that I might see my future husband—and the carriage—in the church—and then she ran away with Miss Clementina! and I ran home, and—oh, my lord!—oh, my lady!—please don't hang me—oh, oh, please don't—oh, oh!

LORD H. Girl, girl—what have you done? (*crossing to LADY HARLESDON*) Go from my sight—go!

JEMIMA. (*aside*) I know he means to hang me—I know he does—oh, oh! *Exit, R.*

LORD H. (C.) This blow will break my heart!

MARY. (L. C.) Poor lady!

LADY H. Oh, Mary, had you not left us, our little darling had not thus been lost to her doating mother!

MARY. And I will retrace and restore her to you—heaven assures me that I shall. Take comfort, dear lady, for I will devote my life to the task of her recovery. Farewell! and pray for me—for I will know neither rest nor sleep till I have given little Clementina back to your expectant arms, asking for my reward only the joy that I shall feel when I behold you once more clasp her to your heart. *Exit, L.*

LADY H. Heaven will go with you in your search, and bless you, Mary!

LORD H. All will be well—with the aid of the police and the offer of a large reward——

LADY H. Oh, my lord, forgive me for the past—for heavily now am I punished for my folly!

LORD H. Dear Emily! (*embraces and leads her off, R.*)

SCENE FIFTH.—*Street. Night. (1st grooves.)*

Enter MARY PRICE, R.

MARY. Where shall I enquire—which way turn my steps? for I have no clue. Oh, heaven! do thou direct and guide me.

Enter TOMMY, L.

TOM. Mary Price, I declare! Couldn't make a mistake; couldn't take anybody else for you—not likely, not likely.

MARY. You, Tommy, in London!

TOM. Yes; Bill Bulldog told poor Tommy that London streets were all paved with gold, and Tommy would have nothing to do but stoop and pick it up; but 'twas all a lie—for there ain't no gold, only mud; and I should have starved, only a gentleman gave me twopence, and I bought a stock of lucifer matches—but I don't seem to make my fortune at it, and I don't think I ever shall—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Well, Tommy, you must come and see me. (*crossing to L.*) Now I cannot stop longer with you, for—

TOM. Yes, I know—going to look for the little lost child. You won't find her; I can though.

MARY. You, Tommy.

TOM. Yes; only just found out though, for I followed and I hunted; they are very cunning, but they are are not so deep as I am—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Oh, Tommy! well shall you be rewarded if—

TOM. Will you buy a box of lucifers?

MARY. Your whole stock, and pay for it its weight in gold.

TOM. Shan't find such a customer as you every day—not likely, not likely

MARY. But say—the child—little Clementina—where is she?

TOM. At the Trampers' Arms. 'Tain't a werry fashionable hotel—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Come, then; and with the aid of the police—

TOM. Police couldn't do nothing: the child would be safe out of reach before they could get into the place, bless you.

MARY. What then can be done?

TOM. We'll dress ourselves up like trampers. I'll be an old gipsy and you shall be my pretty daughter, and nobody couldn't have a prettier daughter—not likely, not likely.

MARY. But where procure disguises?

TOM. Tommy knows—all sorts of clothes, if I'd only got the money. I could buy such a beautiful coat for sixpence.

MARY. Oh! if we recover the child, you shall have plenty of money, and be dressed like a gentleman.

TOM. Then I should retire from business, and set fire to my lucifers—'cause it wouldn't look well to see a gentleman's property selling lucifers—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Come, Tommy, let us hasten.

TOM. There's no hurry—I know what I am about: but you must mind and keep up your disguise, and behave like a good

daughter to your poor old father; for if the thieves found us out, they wouldn't let us go away alive—not likely, not likely.

MARY. I will do my best, you may feel assured of that; but I should tremble, if asked by one of them to tell their fortune.

TOM. La! that's easy enough. Tell the ugly old women they are young and handsome, and sure to get good rich husbands. When you go to fish in the great river of life, only put a golden bait upon your hook, and all the gudgeons are sure to nibble—ha, ha, ha! You've only got to tell all the lies you can think of, and you'll do. Fortunes, now-a-days, are not made by simple truth and honesty—not likely, not likely.

Exeunt, L.

SCENE SIXTH.—*Interior of the Tramper's Arms, St. Giles's.*

Door, L. 3 E., window, C., tables, chairs, jugs, &c.

BILL BULLDOG, NICK SAWBRIDGE, and ROBERT PRICE seated at a table, down L.—CADGERS, &c., seated, drinking and smoking, R.—MOTHER LEE seated on a low stool at the back, R. C., nursing the child, a quart pot on the ground, at her feet—a blind FIDDLER is leaning against the door, L. 3 E., scraping away. A dance of CADGERS.

BILL. Well, Bob, it's very lucky for you that we happened to pick you up.

ROBERT. Perhaps not.

BILL. Perhaps not! (*turning to FIDDLER*) Stop your row, will you, or I'll put that fiddle of your'n behind the fire.

(*FIDDLER stops playing, and holds out his hand*)

NICK. Be off, or you'll get more kicks than ha'pence here, I can tell you. *Exit FIDDLER and CADGERS, door, L. 3. E.*

BILL. Bob, I considers that just now you made a very ungrateful observation. Why, when we tumbled over you, you were staring about the streets.

ROBERT. Yes; I had come to London to look after work, and had wandered about for days, seeking and never finding it. Everybody asked me who was my last master, and where was my character.

NICK. People gets so werry partickler.

ROBERT. My sister was my only hope, and I have quite forgotten the name and address of the people where she is in service.

BILL. (*looking significantly at NICK*) That's a pity, (*aside*) for we don't mean to tell you just at present.

ROBERT. And when you met me, I had not tasted food for four-and-twenty hours; and last night I slept upon a door step.

BILL. Serves you right for trying to be virtuous: be a wagabond, and you'll live in clover as we do. So just say you'll join us, and we'll soon find you plenty of work, and you shall be well paid for doing on it.

ROBERT. I must give myself to you, for I cannot starve; though, heaven knows I would now, were opportunity offered me, be a good and honest man.

BILL. Plenty of time to turn virtuous, when you grow old and helpless.

NICK. (*turning and shouting to MOTHER LEE, who is dozing*) Holloa! I say, you there, don't keep bobbing your head up and down like that, or presently you'll smash the dear little creature's nose!

MOTHER L. I'm so tired.

NICK. Muzzy, you mean.

MOTHER L. Any reward offered yet for this here blessed little babby?

BILL. Only a paltry *hundred* pounds—so we'll wait a bit, and to-morrow it's safe to be doubled. (*knocking heard at an outer door—all start to their feet*)

BILL. Who knows but that may be the peelers come in search of the kid—you'd better mizzle into yonder room until they're gone again. You, Mother Lee, d'ye hear?

TAVERN BOY. (*at door*) No danger, gemmen, it's only a gipsy girl and her old dad.

Music.—Enter MARY PRICE and TOMMY disguised, door L. 3 E.

MOTHER L. (*again sitting*) Ah, two of our tribe!—Do you come from Norwood?

MARY (C., *disguising her voice*) No; from near Canterbury. (*aside*) My brother still with those vile associates? and there is the dear child—asleep, poor babe.

TOM. (R. C.) Poor old gipsy Tom, is very tired—and his daughter, too—but never mind beds, we can sleep upon the benches or the floor.

TAVERN BOY. (*at back*) 'Tis well you're so easily satisfied. Every crib occupied—six in a bed—no room for a mouse, except here in the tap room. *Exit.*

BILL. (*crossing to MARY*) Come, I say, you're a nice young gipsy wench, suppose, for pastime, you tell us our fortunes?

MARY. Willingly! and, with your leave, I'll begin with this young man. (*crossing to ROBERT*) Show me your hand?

ROBERT. (L. C.) There—and now let's hear all you know of the past concerning me—the future is a secret to us both.

MARY. (*looking at his hand*) You were left an orphan at an early age.

ROBERT. That's true, at all events.

MARY. (C.) Were apprenticed to rather a severe master, and ran away from him.

ROBERT. This girl must be a witch.

MARY. At home, and ever since you have been in London, bad company has ever proved your ruin.

ROBERT. It has, I own, and——

BILL. (R. C.) This will never do. (to MARY) If you can't tell fortunes better than that, young woman, sit down and hold your tongue.

MARY. I am but young in the craft as yet.

TOM. That's the reason; but she'll read the stars much better when she's as old as her father.

(OLD MOTHER LEE *nods*, and is going to sleep)

MARY. I'll hold the child. This poor old woman, overcome by sleep, has nearly let her fall. (takes the CHILD, and kisses her, *aside*) Thank heavens! the dear child is in my arms again. Oh, could we but escape!

(*coming down*, R. C.)

TOM. (to her, R.) Hark! Hush! Have patience: if the worst comes to the worst, I have bought a pair of big pistols—won't fire, but they won't know that—not likely—not likely!

Re-enter TAVERN BOY.

TAVERN BOY. Master says it's twelve o'clock, and we shall have the peelers a popping in to pay us a wisit—so all that has got beds is to go to roost—the others must make a shift as well as they can.

BILL. (*rises*) Come, lads. Old Mother Lee, look to the babby.

MOTHER L. (*starting up from sleep*) Ay, to be sure I will. Why, where is she?

MARY. Here, mother, I have her safe; you nearly dropped her in your sleep.

MOTHER L. I'm so tired; but I'll take care, I'll take care. (*takes the child again*)

BILL. Mind you do, or you'll nap it. Come—to bed!

ROBERT. (*aside*) To bed—but not to rest. There was a time when I could sleep in peace, but that was long ago—long ago. Good night, my little gipsy fortune-teller; unlike the rest of your tribe, you tell the truth.

Music.—All go off, different entrances, except MOTHER LEE, TOMMY and MARY PRICE.

TOM. (C.) Poor gipsy Tom, though he can't have no bed, would like a drop of gin to keep the cold out. Hollo, here! bring us half a pint. (*it is brought and paid for*)

MOTHER L. (*rising*) Yonder's my room—so I'll take the child and go to bed. (*going*, R.)

TOM. (C.) No—stop a bit with us, and have a drop—'tis

capital gin. (*pours out*—MOTHER LEE *drinks*) Old Tom, they calls it—ha, ha, ha!—here, take another glass.

MOTHER L. (R.) Success to the gipsy tribe!—'Tis capital stuff.

TOM. I told you so. (*to MARY, who is L.*) Madge, do you mind the child, while my dear sister here takes another glass.

MARY. (*crossing, c., to MOTHER LEE*) Ay, that I will, with pleasure. Mother, give the child to me. (*takes CHILD, goes up, and sits*)

MOTHER L. Thanks, daughter; I am getting old, d'ye see, and a little drop of comfort does me good.

TOM. Drink, then, and spare it not; here, take the measure and drink it all; we'll have more when that's gone.

MOTHER L. (*sits at table, R.*) My service to you, father. By-the-bye, you're old enough to be the king of the gipsies—and I am called the gipsy queen—ha, ha, ha!—Suppose you and I were to make a match of it—ha, ha, ha!

TOM. That would be capital. Ha, ha, ha! (*nudges the old WOMAN*)

MOTHER L. We'd have a glorious wedding. Ha, ha, ha! A coach and six——

TOM. No—eight.

MOTHER L. And all the gipsies should dance at our wedding.

TOM. Every one.

MOTHER L. And I'll have a new gown—yellow, trimmed with red. Ha, ha, ha!—a splendid, glorious wed—ding.

(*Music.—overcome by the liquor, MOTHER LEE falls asleep, her head on the table*)

MARY. (*coming cautiously forward*) She sleeps; we must not lose a moment. (*hurries over to the door*) Ah! 'tis locked!

TOMMY. (*opening the window*) But the window isn't; and as we are on the ground floor, jumping out won't break your neck—not likely, not likely!

MARY. Quick, then, dear faithful friend! Hold the child, for but a moment, while I——

TOM. Jump on this. (*places a chair under the window, then takes the child from MARY, who goes out*)

MARY. (*looking into room, and extending her arms*) Now, the child, now——

TAVERN BOY. (*without, R.*) Master, there's some one bolting out o' window!

MARY. Oh, heaven!

MOTHER L. (*starting up*) What's that? Ah! give me the babby.

TOM. Not likely, not likely. (*giving CHILD to MARY*) Off you go, and I'll be after you. (*MARY disappears with the CHILD*)

MOTHER L. (*clinging to TOMMY as he is about to escape*)

TOM. Poor Mary's afraid the Bulldog will bite her ; but not while I am here—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Come, let us at once away.

ROBERT. No, Mary dear, I cannot leave Ashford yet ; but soon I——

MARY. Well, you will find me at Lord Harlesdon's, in Grosvenor Square. For your own sake, dear Robert, delay not to seek me there ; and all that a fond sister can accomplish to promote a brother's welfare, I will do with joy and gladness. (*embracing him*) Good-bye, Robert—good-bye—and heaven bless you ! *Exit door, L.*

TOM. (*to ROBERT, singing*) A mouse may get into a trap,
And sob and sigh in vain ;
But the question is, after such a mishap,
Will he ever get out again ?

Not likely, not likely.

Exit, L.

ROBERT. Dear, good Mary, I *will* be warned by your wise counsels—will accompany you to London—yes, I—(*going—the TWO MEN stay him, grasping each an arm*)

BILL. Nonsense. Here, Boosey, bring some brandy. Go to-morrow, and we'll make a night of it.

NICK. That's it !

BILL. (*singing*) “ And we won't go home till morning,” &c.

NICK *joins, and they drag ROBERT off, R.*

SCENE SECOND.—*Chamber in Lord Harlesdon's Mansion.*
(*1st grooves.*)

Enter JEMIMA, R.

JEMIMA. Dear me, what a bustle everybody is in to be sure. The house is full of company. But his old lordship is by no means pleased to see so many dashing gentlemen, bowing and smiling to his beautiful wife. Now, what in the world could ever have induced her to marry a man old enough to be her grandfather, I can't imagine. However, that's no business of mine. I wish, though, Mary Price would come back ; for while she is away, all the work in the nursery is on my shoulders. Ah ! here come two of our noble guests.

Enter LORD CLAVERING and LIEUTENANT AUBREY, L.

JEMIMA. (R.) If you please, gentlemen, the dinner is nearly ready.

LORD C. (C.) And we, my dear, are quite ready for our dinner. Upon my word, you're a pretty little girl ! (*chucks JEMIMA under the chin*) Her ladyship displays remarkable good taste in the selection of her female servants.

JEMIMA. Thank you, my lord. (*aside*) What a very civil-spoken gentleman, and an excellent judge of beauty. *Exit, R.*

LORD C. (R. C.) By-the-bye, Aubrey, there's another charming girl, a domestic here, named Mary Price, whom you have not seen.

LIEUT. A. (L. C.) Your lordship is in error; I have seen her.

LORD C. Where? Not since we have arrived in London. The girl's gone on a visit to her friends at Ashford.

LIEUT. A. Still I have seen her. She was formerly in the service of a family at Dover, and I often met her walking with a young infant on the beach. Indeed, we encountered each other so frequently, that at length I accosted her, and her amiable manner, her enchanting modesty, inspired me with a profound respect.

LORD C. A nursery maid's modesty!—ha, ha, ha! Did you try the test of gold—or even silks and satins?

LIEUT. A. (L. C.) My lord! I should scorn myself, could I act the tempter, and betray a poor and virtuous girl to infamy.

LORD C. How amiably romantic! 'Gad! I see you're smitten with the little nursery maid. But if you are so prudish I am not; and when Mary Price returns, shall make love to her for pastime. I am not going to yawn myself to death, to please all the sentimentalists in England.

LIEUT. A. Beware, my lord! I will not suffer any man on earth to insult Mary Price with impunity. I shall believe myself honoured if permitted to be her champion.

LORD C. Bravissimo! Mayhap 'tis your intent to elevate her to the dignity of *Mrs. Lieutenant Aubrey*?—ha, ha, ha! My dear fellow, allow me to congratulate you! The champion of a nursery maid!—by Jove, a capital joke!—ha, ha, ha, ha!

LIEUT. A. A joke that appears to give you so much pleasure, my lord, that I would not deprive you of it on any consideration. Yet, amidst your mirth, be pleased to bear in mind however you may jest, I am thoroughly in earnest.

Exeunt, LORD C. laughing, R.

SCENE THIRD.—*Hyde Park.*

Music.—Enter BILL BULLDOG and NICK SAWBRIDGE, L. U. E.

BILL. Well, Nick, my covey, here we are in the famous Hyde Park, London; and who do you think I met not a minute ago?

NICK. It's hard to say.

BILL. Why, old Mother Lee, the gipsy; and I have promised her a canary bird, as she calls a sovereign, for her assistance in a first-rate dodge of mine. So she's gone to fetch her disguise; for the park-keepers wouldn't let her into the park as a gipsy woman.

NICK. And what's this dodge you speak of?

BILL. Kidnapping. Old Mother Lee herself put me up to it. Every a'ternoon, one of Lord Harlesdon's nursery maids comes here for a walk with his daughter, the Right Honourable Miss Clementina. So while old Mother Lee tells the servant's fortune, we cuts away like vinking with the Right Honourable Miss Clementina, for the sake of the reward that's sertain to be offered.

NICK. And do you suppose as how the young lady will go away quietly with the likes of us?

BILL. Lord bless your soft head! why, she's quite a little kid—not able to speak a single word. But see; here comes old Mother Lee.

Music.—Enter OLD MOTHER LEE, with cloak over her gipsy's dress, L.

MOTHER L. Well, here I am you see, true as the clock to my appointment—and just in time; for yonder comes Lord Harlesdon's nursery maid, with the child, and by express appointment, for I promised to tell her fortune—so now to appear in my true character. (*throws off cloak*) You two will watch yonder behind the trees, and see how I manage. Away with you!

Music.—MOTHER LEE, BILL, and NICK retire behind the trees, R. U. E.—Enter JEMIMA with the CHILD, L.

JEMIMA. How very warm it is! I'll just sit down and have a rest. (*sits on bench or seat*) It's very near the time when the old gipsy woman promised to meet me here, and tell me my fortune. Luckily this is a very lonely spot, so we are not so likely to be noticed. I hope she'll come.

MOTHER L. (*R., advancing*) Good morrow, pretty maid. (*JEMIMA starts*) A charming day. You see I keep my promise: and now at once to business. Cross my hand with silver, and I'll astonish you.

JEMIMA. You will! Oh, mother, I am very much obliged to you indeed.

MOTHER L. This sweet child, I can see with half an eye, is the little daughter of Lord Harlesdon.

JEMIMA. The only one. Dear me, you're as good as a witch. No offence, I hope—but pray don't bewitch me.

MOTHER L. You have much to hope, but nothing to fear from me. But you must cross my hand with silver, before I open to your view the book of fate.

JEMIMA. Well, now for it. There's half a crown for you.

MOTHER L. 'Tis well. What a pity it's now broad daylight;—were we surrounded by the shades of night, I could

raise up such a vision to thine eyes as should fill thee with wonder and amazement! But I have it—lend me thy handkerchief. (JEMIMA *gives it*) Now, while I bind your eyes, this little dear may run and have a gambol on the grass.

Music—MOTHER LEE *binds the handkerchief over JEMIMA'S eyes, and takes from her the CHILD, which BILL BULLDOG and NICK SAWBRIDGE seize, and run off with her, R. U. E.*

(R. C.) Now, in a minute you will see the vision—your future husband, a young nobleman, coming in his carriage to take you to be married, and all the neighbours gathered round the church to wish you joy.

JEMIMA. (L. C.) Oh! that would be a sight. A nobleman and a carriage too—but I see nothing yet.

MOTHER L. You must have patience. Stir not from that spot until the vision rises to your view. My child, have patience—patience, patience!

Music.—*exit* MOTHER LEE, *cautiously, R. U. E.*

JEMIMA. (*her eyes still bound*) The vision's a long time making its appearance. I see nothing yet of the young nobleman, coming to take me in his carriage to be married. Dear me, what a time he takes—and where are all the neighbours assembled round the church to wish me joy? I don't see one of them—no, nor even the church. I say, old mother gipsy, I hope you're not deceiving me!

Enter TOMMY, *the Idiot, as lucifer match vendor, L. U. E.*

JEMIMA. Why, the old gipsy don't even answer me. She is certainly an infamous old cheat. But I'll untie the handkerchief. To tell me I should see the young nobleman, my future husband, before my very eyes. (JEMIMA *has unbound her eyes, and perceives TOMMY staring her full in the face*) Oh dear! Oh lord! What apparition's that? You never can be the young nobleman, I'm sure.

TOM. No; poor Tommy can't be a nobleman in such a dress as this—not likely, not likely.

JEMIMA. (*looking around*) Mercy upon me!—where is the dear child? Oh! this is some wicked plot to ruin me. What will his lordship and her ladyship say? Miss Clementina! Where are you! Come to me. Oh! I shall cry my eyes out. The child is lost. (*to TOMMY*) Did you see anything of a little girl? Quick! Answer me!

TOM. Yes; two wicked fellows ran away with the child. No use stopping in the park—won't find her here—not likely—not likely.

JEMIMA. Help, there! Police! Park keepers! Everybody

stop 'em! Hold fast the villains with the child! Oh! what a fool I have been!

TOM. I ain't a going to contradict you—not likely, not likely.

JEMIMA *runs off*, L. U. E., *followed by* TOMMY.

SCENE FOURTH.—*Handsome Chamber. 2nd grooves.*

Enter LORD HARLESDON, R.

LORD H. Before my eyes, to flirt with all these puppies—I can bear it no longer. 'Tis evident I am the laughing-stock of my own guests. Oh! why was I fool enough to marry a woman so many years my junior—and that I so dearly love her but aggravates the cruel pangs of jealousy, and I dare not remonstrate, for I should but add to the ridicule with which I am overwhelmed by these coxcombs, who surround and pour into her willing ear the poison of insidious flattery. She comes. Betray me not, my goaded feelings; I must affect composure, must wear a smiling face, to hide the torture at my heart.

Music.—*Enter* LADY HARLESDON, R., *arm-in-arm with* LORD CLAVERING, *and followed by* LIEUTENANT AUBREY.

LORD C. (L. C.) Ha, ha, ha! good—capital, 'pon my honour. Your ladyship, I protest, is quite a wit, pointed and brilliant, you both cut and shine.

LADY H. (C.) Flattery—rank flattery, my lord. What say you, Lieutenant Aubrey.

LIEUT. A. (R.) That words from lips so beautiful, can never fail to charm the listening ear.

LADY H. Such gallantry I little expected from a gentleman so seriously inclined as Lieutenant Aubrey

LORD C. Serious! Ha, ha, ha! Your Ladyship may well say *serious*. My worthy friend the Lieutenant, is a young philosopher, a youthful sage—in fact, a military moralist; so rigid, that I verily believe he'd as soon hang himself as carry off a pretty girl, though she requested him to do her the favour. Ha, ha, ha!

¹⁶ LORD H. (L., *aside*) The incorrigible coxcomb.

LIEUT. A. It appears, my lord, you have a desire to be witty, and 'tis a pity your ability should be so far behind your inclination. E'en have your jest, but not at my expense. I caution you. I serve the Queen, and have the honour to wear a sword. You understand?

LORD C. Well, sir—

LADY H. No angry feelings—all here are friends.

LORD C. Your ladyship's behest commands implicit obedience. (*aside to her*) But really we are very negligent to your venerable grandpa—I mean your ladyship's most patriarchal

husband. Ha, ha, ha! (*to LORD HARLESDON*) My lord, I have the honour to salute you.

LORD H. My lord, I——

LADY H. (*crosses to LORD HARLESDON*) Apropos, what say you, my dear—will you sit down with us to a hand at whist? This rattling cavalier proposed a quadrille, but that I am very sure would not afford you the least amusement.

LORD H. My lady, you have exactly guessed my taste. To a game at whist I give the preference. (*aside*) But well I know the import of these jeers. Come, gentlemen, with your leave——

Enter SERVANT, L.

SERVANT. Mary Price, my lady, has just returned from Ashford.

LADY H. My favourite domestic—send her to me.

Exit SERVANT, L.

LADY H. (*crosses to L.*) Gentlemen, I will follow you in a moment.

LORD H. (C.) This way, my lord.

Exeunt LORD HARLESDON and LORD CLAVERING, R.

LIEUT. A. (*aside*) Mary returned! I'll seek the earliest opportunity to warn her of the base designs of Clavering. (*to LADY HARLESDON*) Madam, I take my leave. *Exit, R.*

Enter MARY PRICE, L.

MARY. My lady, I have taken the liberty to bring these flowers for your sweet child—some of them grew upon my mother's grave.

LADY H. Thank you, Mary, for this proof of affection for your little charge. (*crosses to L.*) Who waits there?

Enter SERVANT, L.

Tell Jemima to bring Miss Clementina hither.

SERVANT. (L.) Jemima is out, your ladyship; she went to the park, and has not since returned.

LADY H. (C.) That's very strange, for 'tis getting late.

MARY. (R.) Permit me, my lady, to go in search of her.

LADY H. Do, Mary—pray do. Should any accident have befallen the dear child, 'twould drive me distracted.

(*crosses to R.*)

MARY. I hope there is no cause for alarm. (*going*)

JEMIMA. (*without, L.*) Help! help! Thomas—William—everybody! help! help! (*rushes in and kneels to LADY HARLESDON*)

LADY H. What has happened—where is my child?

through the window) No, you shan't—ah! (*screaming*) Bill, help!—the baby!

(*music*—TOMMY thrusts the old GIPSY away, and again bolts towards the window—MOTHER LEE continues screaming, “Bill! the child, the child!”—BILL runs on, R. 1 E., and seizes TOMMY’S leg, when he is half out of window, and pulls him back—TOMMY draws a stout cudgel from under his coat, and striking BILL on the head, floors him, then hits right and left at NICK and the CADGERS, who enter every way—the cudgel is knocked from TOMMY’S hand and he is seized—after a struggle he slips out of his overcoat, leaving it in their hands, and running up, jumps on to the chair, placing one leg out of window, drawing and presenting a brace of pistols, at the CADGERS, who are following again to seize him—all stand back)

TOMMY. You haven’t got me yet, and you ain’t a going to have me—not likely, not likely!—ha, ha, ha! (*BILL is endeavouring to rise—tableau*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.—*Street. (1st Grooves)*

Enter BILL BULLDOG, *his head bound up*, NICK SAWBRIDGE and ROBERT PRICE, L.

BILL. (R.) Clean gone, clean gone! not a trace—that I should be so reg’larly took in, and have my head smashed, and all by a idiot, and I’m such a sensible feller, too.

NICK. (C.) Well, it are aggrawating.

ROBERT. (L. C.) But what is all this? and what the cause of that uproar, which brought me from my bed?

BILL. I’ve lost a babby; that’s what it is.

NICK. Yes; lost a babby that we had found.

ROBERT. I do not understand.

BILL. Don’t understand what a babby is? well, a kid then—that’s plain English, I believe.

NICK. A blessed infant, that was worth at least two hundred pounds to us.

BILL. And, to think that a idiot should have sense to commit such a heartless robbery on poor industrious chaps. But never mind, bad luck now, wuss another time.

NICK. What’s to be the next move, Bill?

BILL. Why, we shall move off to quod if we don’t look out;

so we must make a good haul at once, and then do for our-what the beaks would like to do for us.

NICK. How do you mean, Bill?

BILL. Why transport ourselves out of the country for a while; so come here, Bob.

ROBERT. (*crossing to BILL*) Well?

BILL. You've forgot, you say, where your sister lives?

ROBERT. Alas, yes!

BILL. Well, I ain't forgot; never forgets nothin' what's likely to be adwantageous to this here individual's interest.

ROBERT. And you will tell me——

BILL. In course, and you shall go and see her.

ROBERT. Oh, yes, yes!

BILL. And then ask Mary to give you a night's lodging in the house; and, when all are snug asleep, just let us quietly in, and we shall find heaps of money and plate, and——

ROBERT. Villain!

BILL. Holloa! there's languidge;—what do you mean?

ROBERT. You dare propose to me that I should ruin, and make the victim of a degrading suspicion, the sister who would give her life to secure my happiness! Oh! I must indeed be fallen, when wretches like to these can suppose me capable of such unparalleled treachery!

NICK. Ain't you our pal?

BILL. Didn't we pick you up?

NICK. (L.) And take you in——

BILL. And grub you—and do for you! I've said it afore, there ain't a morsel of gratitude in the whole univarsal world!

ROBERT. (C.) And yet I thank you that you have proposed this to me.

BILL. Ah, he's coming round!

NICK. I thought he would.

ROBERT. You have opened my eyes fully to the peril in which I so long have stood; harkye, we part now and for ever—proceed not with the design which you have just now mentioned, and, for me, you are safe—pursue it, and I swear I will denounce you! (*crosses to L.*)

BILL. Oh! but, Mister Bob, you are not going like that?

NICK. Not exactly.

ROBERT. You dare not attack me here, for you would seal your own ruin. Oh, thank heaven! that it is not yet too late to draw back from the abyss which so long has yawned beneath my feet—for honest industry henceforth all my thoughts, and I will yet be an honour to the memory of the dear parents now mouldering in their grave. *Exit, L.*

BILL. Well, I never met with sich shameful treatment in all

my life! Catch me doing a good turn to a fellow-creetur in distress—that's all!

NICK. But it won't do to let him go off like that—he'll tell Mary, and——

BILL. Yes, come along—we'll make him take a solemn oath to hold his tongue, or else—come along, Nick.

Music—they run off, L.

Enter LORD CLAVERING, R.

LORD C. Yes; I am determined, at all hazards, she shall be mine. A few miles from town I have a snug retreat, called the White Cottage, which has before served me on similar occasions—thither Mary Price shall be conveyed; but there will be some peril in its accomplishment, and I shall need a couple of sturdy, resolute fellows——

Re-enter BILL and NICK, L.

BILL. He's off—couldn't see nothing of him.

NICK. And are we to be balked of that job, when there's such a lot of plate and——

LORD C. Hem! hem! (*they start*)

BILL. Oh, lord—who's that?

NICK. 'Tain't a peeler, is it?

LORD C. I think I may say it will prove fortunate for all of us that we have met.

BILL. (*aside to NICK*) I knows him—he's a lord. What's he up to?

LORD C. Are you inclined to earn a few sovereigns?

BILL. Well, we're not partickler.

NICK. In a honest way, in course?

LORD C. Precisely. Whose plate chest is it that you have a weakness for?

NICK. Oh!

BILL. When he says honest, he means what we calls honest.

LORD C. I understand.

BILL. Many honest chaps of our sort gets a few years penal servitude, and so——

LORD C. And so I'll come to the purpose, for I see you are the very men I needed. Listen! very near there dwells a young woman, named Mary Price?

BILL. Why, she's a townswoman of ours. She comes from Ashford. We knows her.

LORD C. (C.) That is fortunate. Carry her off to this address (*gives a card*) by any stratagem, and I'll handsomely reward you.

NICK. (L.) No easy job, your honour. Howsomever, we'll try it on—eh, Bill?

BILL. (L. C.) In course we will. Leave all to me—I'll plan the dodge myself. But your honour won't object to give us a trifle to bind the bargain?

LORD C. (*gives money*) Take this as an earnest of a liberal reward, should you succeed. Whether you know me personally or not, observe I am not to be named in the affair.

BILL. Certainly not, your honour—we're wide awake—a little bit of muslin on the sly—ha, ha, ha! Come along, Nick. 'This chap, my lord,'s called Nick—old Nick, because as how he ain't a young 'un in roguery.

NICK. Right, Bill, my boy—I wasn't born yesterday.

Exeunt NICK and BILL, L.

LORD C. What should we do in these dull times, without a little occasional intrigue—and this charming girl once in my power, I shall have pastime for six months at least, till some new flame extinguishes the old one. Thus do we sportsmen in the field of love pursue the game of beauty. Now I'll return to the afflicted parents of the lost infant, make a serious face—as long as Lieutenant Aubrey's, if I can—and act the sentimentalist—a part for which I never was designed by nature in the domestic drama of man's life.

Exit, R.

Enter LIEUTENANT AUBREY, L., during the above speech.

LIEUT. A. I scorn to act the listener and the spy; yet cannot shut my ears against the truth. Lord Clavering spoke of a charming girl, whose ruin he now contemplates. Great heavens! can she be Mary Price? He named her not, but my life on it, she is the intended victim. I will watch him with a vigilant eye, and tear the innocent lamb from the tiger's fangs. Beware, most noble libertine! Beware and tremble at an honest soldier's vengeance.

Exit, R.

SCENE SECOND.—*Chamber at Lord Harlesdon's.*

LADY HARLESDON *discovered, C., on one knee, eagerly embracing her child*—LORD HARLESDON *on her right hand*—MARY, L. C. TOMMY, L., *still in gipsy garb*—JEMIMA, R.

LADY H. Oh, happiness! my darling treasure restored to me. This moment of overpowering joy more than repays me for the anguish I endured whilst thou wert lost to me. (*embracing the child*)

LORD H. (*gently taking the child from her*) Control your emotion, dearest, and let the past be as a dream, no more to be remembered. (*passes the child over to JEMIMA*—LADY HARLESDON *rises*)

JEMIMA. Oh! bless your pretty little heart! You won't hang me now, will you, my lord?

LORD H. Profit by the terrible lesson you have received.

JEMIMA. Ah! that I will.

LORD H. You are now forgiven.

JEMIMA. Thank you, my lord. Oh! I am so pleased; but I shan't be quite happy till I have had a good cry—oh, oh!

Exit, R., crying, and with the child.

LORD H. And now—for these gipsies.

MARY. We are no gipsies, my lord.

LORD H. Indeed! who and what then are you?

MARY. I am— (*throwing off hat and cloak*) behold!

LADY H. Ah! (*embracing her*) Dear, faithful Mary!

TOM. (*also throwing off his disguise*) And I am poor Tommy. Won't be gipsy no longer: the dear little babby's saved, and that's enough. You won't lose her again, I hope—not likely, not likely.

LADY H. Mary, I cannot find words to express my admiration of your noble conduct.

MARY. (*pointing to TOMMY*) To this poor fellow, who is termed an idiot, you owe the restoration of your child. He traced the gipsy to her rendezvous, and laid the plan for the recovery of the dear innocent. I accompanied him to the abode of wretchedness and vice, secured our prize, and brought her home in safety to her fond mother's arms.

LADY H. For which heaven will bless you. (*to LORD H.*) And our eternal gratitude——

LORD H. (*crossing to MARY*) And in the first place, a bank note, Mary, for one hundred pounds—the offered reward——

MARY. (*taking note*) Is it mine, to dispose of as I think proper?

LADY H. Certainly.

MARY. (*to TOMMY*) A word with you, poor Tommy. Suppose you had a hundred sovereigns, what would you do with them?

TOMMY. Oh! Tommy buy a great big waggon full of lucifer matches, and make his fortune, and then poor Tommy never come to the workhouse—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Then here is the money for you.

LADY H. Mary!

LORD H. Noble, generous girl!

TOM. A hundred sovereigns!—this bit of paper one hundred canary birds! Tommy got a good strong cage to put 'em in. (*puts the bank note into a tobacco box, which he deposits in his pocket*) Thank you, my lord, and my lady, and Mary too. Poor Tommy now be one day Lord Mayor of London, with a hundred canary birds in his cage. If they offer to make him Mayor of Ashford, he wouldn't accept the office—not likely, not likely.

MARY. I will now, if you will permit me, see this poor

fellow to a place of safety for the night ; for, with that bank note about him——

LORD H. He must remain here.

LADY H. Certainly.

TOM. Certainly not, my lady—not till I have bought that beautiful new second-hand sixpenny coat, to make me a swell. Couldn't think of sitting down to dinner and supper with your lordship while I am in these rags, and my pockets full of lucifers—not likely, not likely.

MARY. (*to* LORD HARLESDON) Pray do not press him, for Tommy is very obstinate.

LORD H. (*smiling*) I should have felt honoured—but I have done.

LADY H. Mary, come with us but for a moment ; there is something important we would say to you.

MARY. Yes, my lady. Remain here, Tommy—I shall presently return to you. *Exeunt, R.*

TOMMY. To be sure I'll remain. What a nice girl she is ! She wouldn't have me for a husband I know, so I shan't ask her—not likely, not likely. But a rich man can't do without a wife. I'll go and look for a wife.

Enter JEMIMA, R.

JEMIMA. The dear child is fast asleep already.

TOM. You want a husband, don't you ? (*taking hold of her*) Then come and marry me directly ; come along.

JEMIMA. Gracious ! don't be violent ! Do you want to murder me ?

TOM. Murder you ?—la, no ! only marry you. Come along.

JEMIMA. If you touch me again, I'll screech.

TOM. Do you know who I am ?

JEMIMA. Yes, Mary Price has told me : you are a fool.

TOM. No, I ain't ; I was yesterday, but I ain't to-day, 'cause I've got plenty of money. You won't refuse a rich husband, I know—not likely, not likely.

JEMIMA. (*aside*) If he wasn't an idiot, I should think he was the young nobleman in the carriage, that that wicked old gipsy told me about.

TOM. Now, come to the *pint* at once—will you marry me and a hundred canary birds ?

JEMIMA. Marry a hundred canary birds—what an extraordinary idea ! But perhaps he's a bird fancier, and that's what he means.

TOMMY. Many gals despises a man, but they falls in love with, and marries the canary birds ; though very often after marriage they soon gets tired of the music. Last time of asking, will you marry——

JEMI. What, you? a regular idiot! not exactly.

TOMMY. And I ain't a going to marry a gal with such a snub nose as you have got, not likely, not likely. *Runs off, L.*

JEMI. Ah! (*screaming*) a snub nose! Oh, the villain! why only this morning, our baker told me it was a Roman, and when I told our cook, she said he meant a *rum un*, and now—but I don't care, I knows I has a nose, and that's enough for me.

Exit, R.

SCENE THIRD.—*Street, Night. (2nd grooves)*

Enter BILL and NICK with a cloak on his arm, L.

NICK. She don't stir out of doors.

BILL. Wait a bit; if she don't come out of her own accord, a message that her brother is waiting here to see her, will bring her out like one o'clock.

NICK. Bill, you've a real genius for invention. I never knowed such a clever chap, blest if ever I did.

Enter LORD CLAVERING hastily, R.

LORD C. Fortune befriends us, my fine fellows; Mary Price now coming this way.

BILL. Alone?

LORD C. No, that idiot fellow is with her; best first be rid of him, or he may prove an obstacle to your purpose.

NICK. Right, for he is as cunning as a fox.

BILL. (*rubbing his head*) And as strong as the devil.

LORD C. The post chaise is yonder. (*pointing L.*) I have clearly explained to you the road to the White Cottage, and remember you will proceed in this as quietly as possible.

BILL. We'll manage it, never fear.

NICK. And give your lordship every satisfaction. If she should squall too loud, with this ere cloak we'll clap an extingisher on her cries.

LORD C. Just so. (*crosses, L.*) Conceal yourselves. See, Mary comes. Secure your prize, and you may reckon on a noble recompense. I'll be on before and make preparation for the reception of my lovely victim—for the girl, at every hazard, shall be mine.

Exit, L. 1 E.

(*Music.*—BILL and NICK conceal themselves, L. 2 E.)

Enter MARY and TOMMY, R. 1 E.

MARY. I am sorry you would not remain to-night at his lordship's mansion.

TOM. Too grand, bed's too soft for poor Tommy—shouldn't find it so comfortable as a cow shed—not likely, not likely.

MARY. You have your money safe?

TOM. Yes; in backey box.

MARY. Mind you take care of it. But, tell me, where do you mean to sleep to-night?

TOM. Easy to find a lodging. All doors fly open to poor Tommy, now he's got plenty o' money. Now, ain't that very odd, Mary? When poor Tommy wanted a friend, he couldn't find one—and now he don't want 'em, they're as plentiful as blackberries—and poor Tommy won't go without a lodging, with a hundred canarybirds in his pocket—not likely, not likely.

MARY. Still, it might not be safe to shew your money, so observe, Tommy, (*taking him to R. 2 E.*) at the corner of yonder street, (*pointing*) is a small coffee house, kept by honest, respectable people, with whom I am well acquainted. Go there—say that you come at my recommendation, and you will find great comfort for yourself, and perfect safety for your treasure.

TOM. La, Mary, you are as good as a mother to me. Good-night, Mary. I wish you were old enough to be Tommy's mother, in right-down earnest, for poor Tommy can't remember his real mother—not the least bit in the world he don't—and the boys used to tell Tommy that he never had a mother; but he didn't believe 'em, he didn't—not likely, not likely.

Exit, R. 2 E.

MARY. (*looking after him*) Poor fellow! If his mind were equal to his heart, what a noble creature he would be. (*BILL and NICK appear, L. 2 E.*) Now I must return. (*comes forward*—*BILL slips behind her, and places himself R. 1 E.*) I hope he will not forget his lordship's request that he should be at the mansion early in the morning. It is, I know, my master's intention to prove a benefactor to poor Tommy. (*going, R., encounters BILL—starting*) Ah!

BILL. Good evening, Miss Mary Price. So you were the gipsy gal that helped to walk off with the babby?—I shan't forget the hobligation I owes you.

MARY. Let me pass.

BILL. And that ere idiot, Tommy, has got the money what ought to ha' been the reward of my honest industry.

MARY. If you do not instantly let me pass——

BILL. Lucky for Master Tommy that just now I haven't got time to attend to him, or——

MARY. Ruffian! Stand aside.

BILL. No; (*grasping her arm*) and you will wish soon you hadn't been quite so saucy.

MARY. (*calling*) Help! Help!

BILL. Now, Nick, now.

Music.—MARY screams—NICK, *hurrying forward, throws cloak over her head, and they are bearing her off, L. 2 E., when TOMMY runs on, R. 2 E.*

TOM. That was Mary Price's voice. Ah! the Bulldog has got hold of her!

Flys at BILL—NICK forces MARY off, L. 2 E.—BILL and TOMMY have a fight—TOMMY is hurled to the ground, and BILL hurries off, L. 2 E.

TOM. (*on ground*) Tommy ain't done for yet—not likely, not likely. (*rises, runs, and looks off, L. 2 E.*) Ah!—there's a po' shay, and they're forcing Mary into it—and I'll have a ride behind—and take her where they will, it shall go hard but I'll follow. Ah! they're off, so here goes. I've got a couple of pistols that won't fire, so I ain't a bit afraid—not likely, not likely. *Scampers off, L. 2 E.*

Music.—Enter ROBERT PRICE, L. 1 E.

ROBERT. At last I have remembered the name of Mary's master, and I will go at once and see her; now I can face her boldly, for the courage of an honest man is at my heart.

Enter LIEUTENANT AUBREY hastily, R. 1 E.

LIEUT. A. Oh, infamy! not a moment must be lost.

ROBERT. Beg your pardon, sir; but do you happen to know the residence of Lord Harlesdon?

LIEUT. A. (*quickly*) You are going thither?

ROBERT. Yes, sir.

LIEUT. A. Then, will you be good enough to tell him that Mary Price has been forcibly carried away by——

ROBERT. My sister!

LIEUT. A. Your sister! Mary Price?

ROBERT. Yes; and give her back to me, or I'll tear your heart out.

LIEUT. A. You know not what you say. I love your sister—would not do her wrong for all the world—would give my life for her defence.

ROBERT. I—I beg your pardon, sir; but where is she—what does it all mean? Tell me, or I shall go crazy.

LIEUT. A. Ruffians, employed by a callous libertine, are even now bearing Mary Price to an abode which, if not speedily rescued, she will never leave with honour!

ROBERT. Where is that place—do you not know?

LIEUT. A. Yes; for a bribe, a valet, formerly in my service, has betrayed his master. A messenger to acquaint Lord Harlesdon of poor Mary's capture; and then, fast as four horses can travel, you and I, my brave fellow, will hasten to the rescue of your sister.

ROBERT. Heaven bless you, sir—heaven bless you. If I were worthy to shake your hand——

LIEUT. A. (*giving his hand*) You are Mary's brother—that is full and ample claim to my friendship.

ROBERT. And I won't disgrace it, sir—believe that. And now, sir, let us hasten to the rescue of poor Mary; and woe betide the men who have dared to lay violent hands upon her. If I but get a fair grasp of their throats, Jack Ketch will be robbed of some of his perquisites! *Exeunt, L. 2 E.*

SCENE FOURTH.—*Interior of White Cottage, door C.—window, R.*

MOTHER LEE *discovered, seated.*

MOTHER L. 'Twas very kind of Bill Bulldog and his pal to get me the housekeeper's place here at the White Cottage, after I lost the child, through going to sleep, and taking a drop too much—that's a shocking habit, and I'll take very little for the future, (*pulls a bottle out of her pocket*) very little, (*drinks*) only a drop in moderation. (*drinks*) So Mary is coming. Ah, bless me! what it is to be young and handsome; now it would be a long time before a noble gentleman would take the trouble to run away with me. No matter, so I get well paid, and a little drop of comfort, I am content.

BILL. (*without*) Halloo! Mother Lee, Mother Lee!

MOTHER L. As I live, here they are. (*throws open C. door*)

Music. Enter BILL BULLDOG carrying MARY still covered with the cloak, C., NICK SAWBRIDGE follows; they place her on a chair, and remove the cloak, she is insensible.

MOTHER L. Mercy upon me! why the girl is dead, she is suffocated.

NICK. Then we shall lose the reward—how cursed unlucky; first a hundred pounds for that ere blessed babby, and now as much or more for the pretty Mary. Oh, Bill, you willain! how could you have the heart to smother the poor gal?

BILL. Hold your tongue, will you, you're just as deep in the mud as I am in the mire. Don't stand there gaping, Mother Lee, like a fool, but fan the gal, and give her air. (*this is done and MARY moves*)

BILL. There now, she is coming to, and we'll go off; Mother Lee will manage her best.

NICK. Besides, delicacy, you know, that's what I considers.

BILL. Yes, you always was a delicate chicken. *Exeunt, C. D.*

MOTHER L. Dear me, I'm frightened! she glares so wildly, that I think she has lost her wits; she certainly is mad, I'll run and call his lordship. *Exit, C. D.*

MARY. My lord, my lady, why am I treated thus? I this my reward for rescuing your child! And you, my fellow servants, to stand by and see me nearly murdered—quick.

Jemima, open the window—give me air—I choke—that's right, good girl, I thank you—wider, wider! (*slowly recovering*)

Re-enter MOTHER LEE with LORD CLAVERING, C. door.

MOTHER L. Yes, your lordship, she is quite deranged, see how wildly she glares.

LORD C. (R.) She has been too roughly treated by those fellows, but will presently recover. Speak to her.

MOTHER L. (L.) You are quite safe, Mary; don't be frightened.

MARY. See, the clouds expand, and from heaven descends an angel form—it hovers o'er my head—joy! it is my mother! She comes to guard her child! Oh! bliss unutterable!

LORD C. This is becoming wearisome.

MARY. (*turning towards LORD CLAVERING and shuddering*) What demon form is that? Do not leave me, mother! stay—protect your child! Oh! she is gone—gone; and I am alone—helpless, defenceless. Oh! mercy, heaven, mercy!

MOTHER L. Pray don't take on so: you are with friends.

MARY. Friends! Where are they—and what place is this? My wandering thoughts begin again to rally—reason returns! Where are the murderers who dragged me hither?—who have so nearly slain me, in the effort to stifle my cries for aid and succour.

LORD C. It shall be my task to punish them, charming girl.

MOTHER LEE *goes off, C. door.*

MARY. (*sees him and recoils*) Ah! Clavering! Oh! now and too well do I understand. This is thy den of infamy; but you shall not hold me; I will shriek for aid. Help!—in heaven's name—help! help!

LORD C. You will but awake the forest echoes.

MARY. Cowardly libertine! I scorn and defy you now, as oft before. The innocent are ever under heaven's protection; but for guilty wretches like to thee, sooner or later the thunder of its wrath descends.

LORD C. More charming than ever in your heroics, Mary Price! I have long adored you; fairly you would not be won; so thank yourself, if you dislike the means by which at last I have secured you.

MARY. And you are a lord—by birth a ruler of us common people. Most fit and worthy are you to govern others!—learn first to govern and control your own vile nature! O, my lord—born to wealth and power—what a pity there was not also some hereditary virtue to which you might succeed!

LORD C. Insolent girl! I will bend your haughty spirit, and, may be, break your heart. Be wise, and give yourself willingly to my arms; for having gone so far, I shall not stop till you are wholly mine.

MARY. Be warned—there are laws.

LORD C. I defy them; and since persuasion will avail me nothing, thus I— (*darting towards her*)

MARY. Help! help! Will no one aid me?

(*Music.—She flies past him, and towards door—as she reaches it, a loud noise of voices and knocking without—*

LORD C. Ah! what means—

MARY. It means, villain, (*returning and confronting him*)
both are suddenly fixed—tableau)

that heaven, as I said, protects the innocent;—rescue is at hand, and the moment of your punishment arrived!

LORD C. (*hurrying up*) It is impossible that—

The C. door is dashed open, and BILL and NICK hastily enter.
Music.

BILL. (C.) My lord—my lord, the cottage is surrounded—

MARY. (R.) Ah, villain—what think you now?

LORD C. (L.) Search as they may, they shall not find you Mary Price; there are secure hiding places here—raise yonder trap.

(*Music.—BILL and NICK look, and perceiving ring, raise small trap, R. C., when TOMMY pops his head up, presenting brace of pistols*)

TOM. Lie down, Bulldog!

(*LORD CLAVERING and MEN are fixed to the spot—MARY sinks on one knee, with hands upraised—tableau*)

You didn't expect to see such a jack-in-the-box, did you—not likely, not likely!

BILL. How the devil did you get there?

TOM. Through a rat-hole! The cellar had got a little window, and Tommy can creep in anywhere.

LORD C. (L.) Kill him! kill him!

TOM. I ain't a going to let 'em—not likely, not likely!

MARY. (*going to TOMMY*) Give me one of those pistols?

TOM. Bless you, they are no use to you—they ain't loaded.

BILL. Ah!

(*Music.—The two MEN seize TOMMY, and drag him up trap—LORD CLAVERING makes over to R., and seizes MARY, who screams—at this moment a loud crash without—all start—TOMMY breaks away, and running up throws open the C. door, when LIEUTENANT AUBREY and ROBERT rush on—LIEUTENANT AUBREY seizes NICK, R. C.; ROBERT, BILL, L.; and TOMMY, strutting across, presents*

his pistols at LORD CLAVERING, R.—all the characters enter—MARY flies to LADY HARLESDON, who embraces her, C.—OFFICERS follow—tableau)

TOM. I've got you—but I ain't a going to shoot you—not likely, not likely! (CONSTABLES secure BILL and NICK)

ROBERT. (R. C.) Titled ruffian, dearly shall you rue this outrage.

LORD H. (L. C., to OFFICERS) Arrest his lordship too; and I will answer for it, he shall not evade the power of the law.

TOM. And mind you muzzle the Bulldog, else he'll bite you—very likely, very likely!

LORD C. Adieu, grandpapa—beware of your pretty wife when I am again at liberty.

LADY H. Wretch!

(*Music.—LORD CLAVERING, BILL, and NICK are taken off, C.*)

LIEUT. A. Mary, you well know that I love you—will you become my wife?

MARY. Oh! can I be indeed so blest—so honoured!

LIEUT. A. Nay, I am but a lieutenant; and your virtues, Mary, would grace a coronet!

ROBERT. Dear sister!

TOM. You won't forget to ask me to the wedding—not likely, not likely!

MARY. Thus then end my trials. To the gentlemen I need not appeal, for I am certain of their sympathy; and those of my own sex, who are, like myself, of lowly birth and state, will see how honesty and integrity may be rewarded; and will derive hope and confidence from the eventful career of MARY PRICE, THE SERVANT GIRL.

PEOPLE.

TOMMY.
R.

AUBREY.

MARY.

LADY H.

LORD H.

PEOPLE.

ROBERT.
L.

Curtain.

MARY PRICE.

Scenery and Incidents.

ACT I.

Scene 1.—**THE DOG & DUCK, ASHFORD.**

An interesting conversation, shewing how vice and wickedness may be found in rural places.

THE TEMPTATION AND THE WARNING!

Mary Price steps out of her way to do a good action—Brother and sister—A contrast—Tommy talks like a fool and acts like a wise man.

Scene 2.—**A NOBLEMAN'S MANSION.**

An uncongenial marriage—What results from Mary Price's return to London.

Scene 3.—**HYDE PARK.**

The fortune teller and the nursery maid—a case of kidnapping—Tommy sets up in trade—Grief enters the lordly mansion—Noble devotion of Mary Price—An idiot's cunning—Hope for the bereaved.

Scene 4.—**The Trumper's Arms, St. Giles's.**

Robert Price having reached London is now on the road to ruin—The old gipsy and the stolen child—Mary Price proves that she has a brave heart, and Tommy gives ample evidence that he is not such a fool as he looks—The stratagem and the escape—The most hazardous adventure that has yet befallen the servant girl—A fool's wit and an idiot's courage—A desperate encounter—The Bulldog in a fix—Tommy a hero and a conqueror.

ACT II.

Scene 1.—**A STREET.**

Robert Price seeing danger before him wisely retraces his steps—Low ruffians and a polished rascal—Danger once more threatens Mary Price.

Scene 2.—**CHAMBER AT LORD HARLESDON'S.**

Happiness once more an inmate of the lordly mansion—A great lady's gratitude and a poor servant girl's generosity—The lost child restored to its mother's arms—Tommy a gentleman and a man of property—A rejected proposal of marriage—A hundred canary birds!

Scene 3.—**STREET AT THE WEST-END.**

The thieves robbed of one job find another—Abduction of Mary Price—Tommy to the rescue!

Scene 4.—**THE WHITE COTTAGE.**

Mary Price's worst adventure—Narrow escape from death—Courage to the last—Hope on, hope ever—Tommy appears very strangely and very unexpectedly—Housebreaking by honest people, and the rogues, high and low, entrapped at last—The virtues of the poor servant girl receive their well-merited reward—Tommy in great luck—and termination of the sorrows and adventures of Mary Price.

